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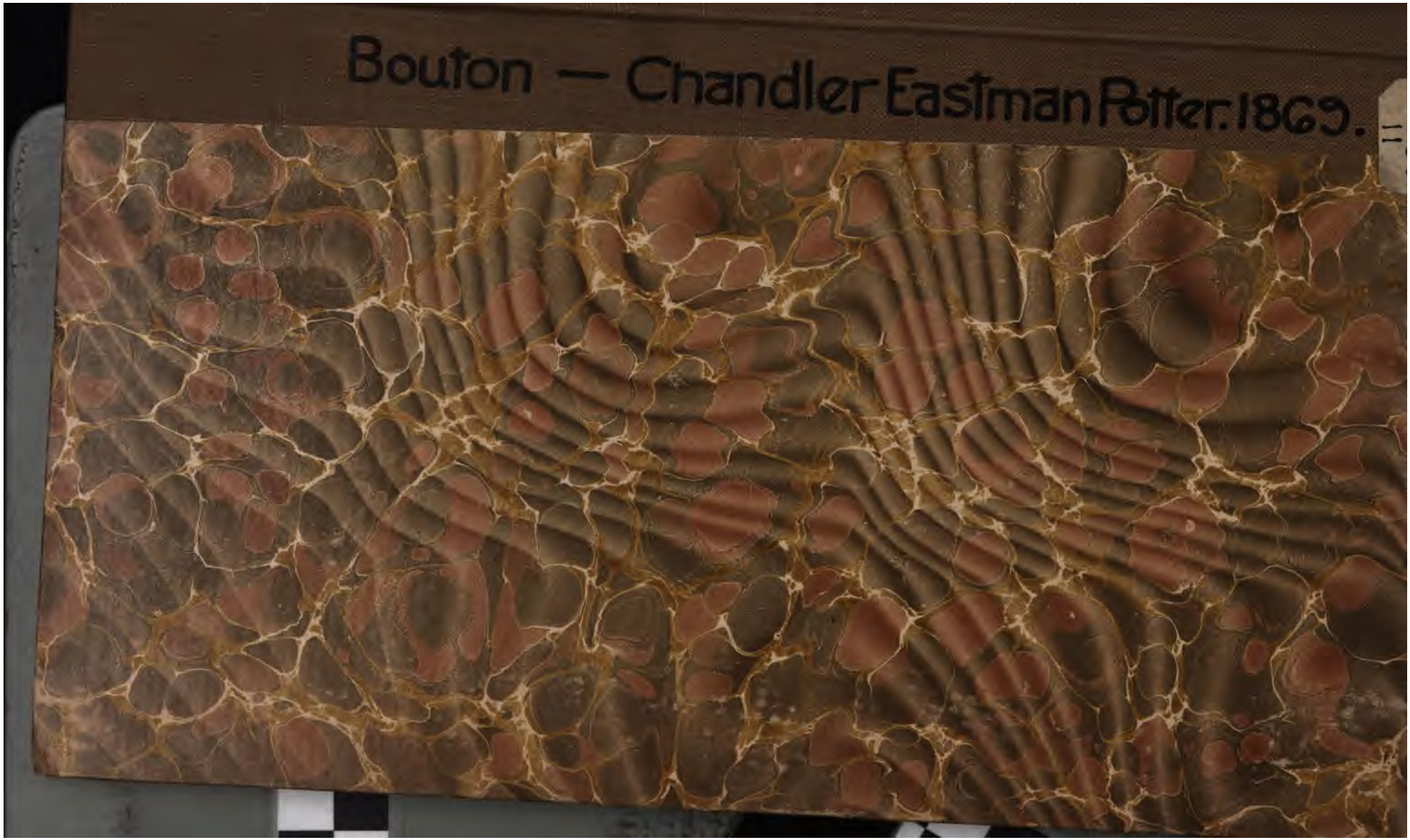
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CHANDLER EASTMAN POTTER.

H.W. Smith

MEMOIR

MEMOIR

OF

THE HON. CHANDLER EASTMAN POTTER.

BY

REV. N. BOUTON, D.D.

COR. SEC. OF THE N. H. HIST. SOC.

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FROM
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MEMOIR OF THE HON. CHANDLER EASTMAN POTTER.

THE Hon. Chandler E. Potter was born in that part of Concord, N. H., known as East Concord, ward No. 2, in the locality designated as Turtle Pond, or Potter's school district, No. 15. He died suddenly, in the city of Flint, State of Michigan, August 3d, 1868, aged 61 years 5 months and 29 days.[1]

His remains were brought for interment to his family burying ground in the Valley Cemetery, in Manchester, N. H., the place of his former residence. There his public life may be said to have begun; there he was known and respected; there he was recognized as the honored colonel and commander of the "Amoskeag Veterans," a volunteer company of noble men, in mature life, which he (chiefly) had been instrumental in organizing (in 1854), and of which he was in command at the time of his death. The funeral services took place on Saturday, August 8, 11 o'clock, A. M., at the Unitarian Church, in Manchester.[2]

The ancestors of the Potter family were among the early settlers of New-England.

DANIEL, the father of Richard and Ephraim, born January, 1698, married Elizabeth Kimball, of Wenham, Mass., Nov. 29, 1728. He was son of Anthony, who was son of Anthony, who settled in Ipswich, 1648, who was son of Robert of Lynn, 1630, and who came to this country from the city of Coventry, in England.

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[1] On the 16th of July previous he left his residence in Hillsborough, in company with his wife, to attend to business in Michigan, where he had a large landed interest. He arrived there, in usual health, on Thursday the 30th of August. On Sunday afternoon, he wrote a letter, and then lay down to sleep. On awaking, he was conscious that disease had stolen upon him, and already, in part, paralyzed his strong physical frame. He remarked that "for the first time in his life, his muscles refused to obey his will." The disease thus stealthily begun, rapidly gained, till, the next day, he was wholly unconscious; and though having the constant attentions of the ablest physicians, and the assiduous and tender care of his wife, nothing could be done for his relief. He quietly breathed his last at 5 o'clock in the afternoon of Monday.

[2] The full company of Veterans, under command of Capt. William B. Patten, with a large number of honorary and former members, marched up Elm, and down Market and Canal streets to the railway station, where they took in charge the remains of Col. Potter. The corps then proceeded to their armory, passed up Merrimack street and around several squares to the house of Capt. Charles Shedd, where, taking Mrs. Potter and friends into the procession, the company moved to the church. There religious services were performed; the chaplain, Rev. Joseph F. Lovering, of Concord, officiating. The procession next moved forward to the Valley Cemetery, and committed the remains of their honored and lamented commander to the grave. Returning, the company met at their armory, at 2 o'clock, P.M., and passed the following resolutions:—

"Whereas, an inscrutable Providence has seen fit to remove from our midst our loved and chosen commander, and whereas we have now performed the last sad rites of sepulture over his remains, therefore be it

"*Resolved*, That in the decease of their Colonel, CHANDLER E. POTTER, the Amoskeag Veterans have sustained an irreparable loss; that their foremost man, foremost from the beginning, who at all times and under all circumstances, in sunshine and in storm, unselfishly sought to promote their highest welfare, is no more; and, for each one of us to resolve that, in our day and generation, we will endeavor to follow his example, is the highest tribute we can pay to his memory. We mourn not alone. Society has lost an ornament; the State a historian, whose labors yet uncompleted, in compiling and preserving her military history, will long outlive our feeble efforts.

"*Resolved*, That these resolutions be entered upon our records, and a copy thereof be transmitted to the family of the deceased."

RICHARD, the grandfather of Col. Potter, b. March 17, 1744; m. Aug. 10, 1766, Lydia Averill, of Topsfield, Mass., b. July 22, 1733. With a brother (Ephraim) and a sister Elizabeth, he went to Concord, N. H., from Ipswich, Mass., in 1771, and bought land in common on the north-westerly side of Turtle pond, and afterwards divided it "equally as to quality and quantity." His wife died August 8, 1824. He died July 5, 1828, aged 84 years.[1] They left two children.

1. Lydia, b. in Topsfield, March 2, 1768; m. 1st, Thomas Stevens, of Loudon, N. H.; m. 2d, David Rollins.
2. Joseph, b. in Concord, Sept. 20, 1772.

JOSEPH, the father of Col. Potter, m. April 25, 1793, Anna Drake, dau. of Thomas Drake, formerly of Hampton, N. H. She was b. Oct. 25, 1774, and died very suddenly, Aug. 23, 1844. Her husband died Feb. 1, 1853, aged 80 years. He inherited the farm, and his children were:

1. Richard, b. October 3, 1793, who now lives in Loudon, N. H.
2. Thomas Drake, b. January 13, 1796, still living on a part of the old homestead, father of Col. Joseph H. Potter, of the army—who was educated at West Point, 1843—wounded in the battle of Monterey, 1846, and who served with honor in the late war.
3. Jacob Averill, b. July 22, 1798, who lived on a part of the farm, owned by Ephraim Potter, was associate justice of the court of common pleas in the County of Merrimack, 1844—1853, and died April 28, 1865, aged 66.
4. CHANDLER EASTMAN, the subject of this notice, was born March 7, 1807. His childhood and early youth were spent at home on his father's farm, and in attending the district school, which was kept in a small school-house near by, about ten weeks in the year. While

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[1] Of his grandfather, Richard, Col. Potter used to relate entertaining anecdotes illustrative of his activity, energy, and power of endurance. For example: "When he took possession of his farm in the fall of 1771, it had upon it only a log house and a hovel built by a former occupant, but thither he removed his family in the ensuing spring. His property at this time consisted of one hundred and thirty dollars in cash, which he paid towards his farm; a horse; a three-year-old heifer; a bed, and some few cooking utensils. With his wife and child upon horse-back; his goods upon a barrow, attached to the horse; himself driving the heifer, he started for Concord. They performed the journey in two days, stoping over night in 'Chester woods,' near Massabesic pond, at old Mother Underhill's, who kept a tavern 'upon the Penecook path.' Arrived upon their farm, they went to work with a will. Of robust make, strong constitution, and industrious habits, their new home soon exhibited evidences of thrift. In the revolutionary war Mr. Potter served six weeks on Winter Hill, under Gen. Sullivan. His name and his brother Ephraim's are on the Association Test in Concord, 1776.

"In 1782, while engaged in logging, three or four miles from home, one of his legs was smashed by a large log which his team was drawing on a side hill; his leg being suddenly caught between the rolling log and a tree. The bruise was so severe as to endanger his life. A council of physicians concluded that Mr. Potter must die; and it would be of no use to amputate his leg. But after the other doctors had gone, Dr. Carrigain, of Concord, said, 'Potter might be saved, and the leg should be cut off.' Accordingly, cutting round the flesh, just below the knee, the doctor took a saw which he brought with him, and commenced operating; but finding the saw very dull, he stopped and requested a neighbor to run home, about a quarter of a mile, and get a sharper saw. With this the operation was finished. Mr. Potter was insensible at the time, but next night he knew the watchers. His leg was cut off close to the knee; the bone was left bare and smooth. In order to make the skin heal over, Dr. C. ordered New England rum to be heated and poured on slowly, while the bone was pricked and roughened with an awl. After a long confinement Mr. Potter was able to get about; and being somewhat of a mechanical genius he constructed for himself a wooden leg, with which he could not only walk comfortably, but could even run and wrestle. He lived many years afterwards, healthy, hardy and active.

yet at home curiosity led him to visit places far and near in the town, which had any traditionary interest. He gathered up all the stories that his grandfather and other old men in the neighborhood would relate about bears, wolves and Indians. He explored the banks of the Merrimack river; scoured the plains; picked up Indian relics; and found, in repeated instances, the bones of Indians slain, as he believed, in the fight between the Mohawks and Pennacooks. With this taste for the legendary and curious, he aspired to a higher education than the district school furnished. Accordingly, at the age of about 18, he went to the academy in Pembroke, N. H., then taught by Master John Vose, where he was fitted for college; entered at Dartmouth in 1827, and graduated in 1831. He paid his college-bills chiefly by teaching school during vacations.

After his graduation he taught select or high schools in Concord one year, and in Portsmouth two years, 1832—1834; represented the latter town in the legislature, 1835; again taught in the high school in Portsmouth from July, 1835, to 1838; read law, while there, with the Hon. Ichabod Bartlett, and with Messrs. Peirce & Fowler at Concord, from 1841 to 1843; began practice at East-Concord; removed to Manchester in 1844; was editor and proprietor of the *Manchester Democrat*, from March, 1844, to 1848; judge of the police court of Manchester from June, 1848, to 1855; edited the *Farmer's Monthly Visitor* in 1852 and 1853, also the *Granite Farmer* and *Monthly Visitor* in 1854 and 1855; was co-editor of the *Weekly Mirror* and *Farmer*, in 1864 and 1865.

On Nov. 1, 1832, Col. Potter married Clara Adela, daughter of John Underwood, Esq., of Portsmouth. She died at Manchester, March 19, 1854, aged 51 years. Their children were:

1. Joseph, b. June 22, 1833.
2. Treat Wentworth, b. Jan. 1, 1836.
3. Drown, b. Feb. 8, 1838; Quar. Mar. Serj. 1st Michigan regt. of volunteers; killed by a band of guerillas, at Garlick's Landing, Va., June 13, 1862. He was a young man of much promise, and greatly esteemed by those who knew him.

The first two sons survive.

His second marriage, Nov. 11, 1856, was with Miss Frances Maria, daughter of Gen. John McNeil,[1] of Hillsborough, N. H., distinguished as an officer of the army, and especially for his daring and bravery in the battles of Chippewa and Niagara, in 1814. After his marriage with Miss McNeil, Col. Potter resided at Hillsborough, in the family mansion, the former residence of Gov. Benjamin Pierce, and cultivated the farm.

In estimating the character and services of Col. Potter, we must take into account his personal qualities.

I. In physical development he was a marked man, six feet three inches in stature; large and well-proportioned, inclining somewhat to

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[1] Gen. McNeil, son of Lt. John McNeil, of Hillsborough, m. Elizabeth Andrews, the eldest daughter of the late Gov. Benjamin Pierce, and sister of President Franklin Pierce. Their children were: 1. Lt. John W. S. McNeil, of the army, who fell mortally wounded in leading an attack upon an Indian camp, in Florida, Sept. 10, 1837. 2. Elizabeth, who m. Capt. H. W. Benham, of the army. 3. Frances, who m. Col. Potter. 4. Benj. Pierce, of the army, who d. at Boston, June 12, 1853. Gen. John McNeil died at Washington, D. C., Feb. 23, 1850, in the 66th year of his age. Mrs. McNeil d. March, 1855.

corpulency, and weighing in full health about 280 pounds. His form was erect; his step, firm and dignified; his countenance, placid; his features exhibiting the play of his emotions; his dark eye, steady and lustrous; in conversation, his natural smile pleasing and winning; in public address, his voice clear, well modulated, and distinct; and, when kindled with emotion, forcible and impressive. In familiar conversation and on fit public occasions, he abounded in anecdotes, historical reminiscences, and facetious sayings that rendered his company both agreeable and desirable. In his domestic and social relations, he was kind, courteous and obliging. When marching, in full uniform[1] at the head of the Amoskeag Veterans, his majestic mien not only awakened admiration, but gave an impression of power and prowess, that almost inspired awe.

II. Although educated for the law, yet his taste and early habits induced him to engage in literary and historical pursuits. Elected a member of the New-Hampshire Historical Society in 1841, he was chosen first vice-president in 1852, and president of the society in 1855–57. In this relation he was active and useful. In 1851, he delivered a learned and valuable discourse before the society on the aborigines of this country,[2] and at a subsequent period read an entertaining essay on the Pennacook Indians.

III. A man of good judgment and careful observation, Mr. Potter, as editor of the *Monthly Visitor*, and other publications, rendered important service for agriculture and manufactures, every department of domestic husbandry, and preëminently for the cause of education, which he advocated constantly and with much ability. His political opinions were very decided, and through life accorded with those of the democratic party.

IV. But his taste led him chiefly into historical research. As an historian, possessed of extensive and valuable information relating to New-Hampshire, and which also he diffused with a ready and liberal pen, Mr. Potter could hardly be ranked second to any man in the State.

1. As a writer of local history. His *History of Manchester*, published by himself in 1856, containing 763 pages octavo, is a rich storehouse of facts respecting the rise and growth of that thrifty, and now the most populous and enterprising city in New-Hampshire. Incorporated into it, also, is valuable information relative to the provincial history of the State, notices of public men, and events of general interest. The published address of Col. Potter, at the centennial celebration of the town of Manchester, October, 1851, is replete with facts and ancedotes, that well repay a perusal. His oration before the "Amoskeag Veterans," February 22, 1855,

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[1] The dress of the Veterans is:—hat, a three-cornered chapeau, trimmed with gold lace, gold eagle on one side and a black plume; coat, blue broadcloth, with buff facing, standing collar, and single breasted; vest, buff kerseymere, standing collar, and single breasted; ruffled shirt; pants, black velvet breeches, with knee buckles, and black worsted hose; boots, with buff leather tops, six inches wide; gun, musket and bayonet, cartridge box and belt of black patent-leather.

[2] After the address, Hon. Samuel D. Bell offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

"*Resolved*, That the thanks of this society be presented to the Hon. Chandler E. Potter, for his learned, ingenious and very interesting address delivered before them this evening, and that a copy thereof be requested for publication among its collections."

is admirable for its fitness to the occasion, and is creditable to the author, both as a specimen of popular and eloquent address, and for its life-like sketches of heroic men.

2. In Indian history, Col. Potter had no superior in New-Hampshire. The stories of Indians to which he had listened in boyhood captivated his imagination. He had heard all the old traditions about the fight on "Sugar-ball plain," between the Mohawks and Pennacooks; had picked up arrows, bones and skulls of Indians; had located, as he believed, the "Old Fort;" examined all the old fortified houses; learnt the traditions about the "Massacre" in 1746, and "Lovewell's great fight" at Pequakitt; hence the Indian history of New-Hampshire was an inspiration to him. As proofs of his ability in this line, it must suffice to refer to details in his *History of Manchester*, and to his biographical sketches in the *Monthly Visitor*, vols. xii. and xiii., of the famous chiefs Passaconnaway, Wonnalancet, Kancamagus, Wattanummon; and to his articles in the same work on the language, manners, customs and religion of the Pennacooks. He contributed, on these subjects, to the valuable history of the N. A. Indians, by Col. Schoolcraft.

3. But if he had no superior in Indian history, it must be conceded he had no equal in the military history of New-Hampshire.[1] To write this latter history truthfully and creditably, it is necessary to have a taste and appreciation for the bold and heroic; to be "in communication" of the spirit, at least, with soldiers in camp, and on the march; in perils and in battle. Not only so, but he must go to the sources of information; collect the details, the *personnel*, of every regiment, officer and soldier of note; he must have before him the muster-roll of every company; the journal of their campaigns, and then the official report of their successes or their defeats. The difficulty of acquiring such details, official and reliable, after the lapse of fifty or a hundred years, can be fully understood only by such as have undertaken the task. Col. Potter understood it.

His Military History of New-Hampshire, his last and crowning work, is published as a part of Adjutant-General Head's Reports, for 1866 (vol. ii.), and for 1868. This military history, eminently to the credit of Mr. Potter, and redounding to the honor of the State, extends from the first settlements in the province, 1623, to the close of the war of 1812—1815. In its details, it shows a minute acquaintance with the ancient province-records, and collateral histories of those times; the conflicts with the Indians in the settlements along the coast; the daring exploits of our men in the capture of Louisburg; the sufferings, endurance, victories and defeats, in the long "seven year's war" with the French and Indians; the revolutionary period; and the war of 1812. The part which New-Hampshire took in these conflicts is exhibited with a detail, authenticity and accuracy, highly satisfactory. Col. Potter had gathered up old papers, letters, pay-rolls, rosters and journals of events relating to all these wars; moreover, with singular

[1] There are or were other men in the State, distinguished for general knowledge of our history. The late Hon. Samuel D. Bell, chief justice, was probably more familiar with the civil and judicial history of New-Hampshire, than any other man. He had carefully examined the old province-records, court-papers and town-records; made copious notes therefrom; and written biographical sketches of prominent men, some of which are published. See vol. viii. *Coll. N. H. Hist. Soc.* We speak of Col. Potter, as having made the Indian and the military history a special study.

patience and perseverance of research, he had learned something of the history of almost every officer and soldier who, in any way, was distinguished in the wars of the aforesaid period. Hence, interwoven with his history, are special sketches of prominent men, in military and civil life, which are of great interest and value, and which commend this military history of New-Hampshire to the descendants of the heroes of former days.

Thus every reader will be instructed and entertained by his biography of General John Stark, Count Rumford, Lt. Gov. John Wentworth, Gov. Benning Wentworth, Gov. John Wentworth, Hon. Samuel Blodgett, Gov. Benjamin Pierce, Hon. Richard H. Ayer, Gen. John McNeil, Gen. James Miller, and Hon. Levi Woodbury.

Besides the above, drawn at length, we have shorter notices of brave officers and men, of whom the State has reason to be proud; but whose names, residence, character and noble deeds were preserved in family records and traditions, in local histories and on tombstones, rather than in public annals.

Of this class of men were Capt. John Goffe of Bedford, Capt. or Gen. Nathaniel Folsom of Exeter, Capt. Alexander Todd of Londonderry, Col. Timothy Beadle or Bedell of Haverhill, Col. Ebenezer Stevens of Kingston, Lt. Col. Isaac Wyman of Keene, Brig. Gen. Joseph Badger of Gilmanton, Col. James Reid of Fitzwilliam, Col. Thomas Stickney of Concord, Col. Ebenezer Webster of Salisbury (the father of Daniel Webster), Col. Benjamin Bellows of Walpole, and Col. David Hobart of Plymouth, a name entitled to high honor for bravery in the battle of Bennington, but which was for a long time confused and lost in the name of *Hubbard*.[1] Many other names of equal note are placed in honorable position, in Potter's military history. Many thanks are his due!

Among unpublished works on which he had bestowed much attention, was, we learn, a vindication of the "Wheelwright deed;" the validity of which he maintained against the objections of Savage, Farmer, and others. We think it highly important that this should be published, that the public may know the grounds on which his faith in the deed rested, and judge for themselves of their force. Mr. Potter had long cherished a desire, even a purpose, to publish a new edition of Belknap's history of New-Hampshire,[2] with notes, or an entire new history of the State, bringing it down to a more recent period. But his labors were suddenly closed. The fruits of them will long remain to his honor and the advantage of posterity.

The death of Col. Potter,[3] occurring within less than a week after the decease of the late chief justice, the Hon. Samuel D. Bell, another honored member of the New-Hampshire Historical Society, is the more felt as a public loss, and the more admonitory to surviving members, to be diligent in service, for the benefit of the present, and of generations that are to come after us.

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[1] See Farmer's *Belknap*, p. 374.

[2] He had prepared the first, and nearly completed the second volume of a new edition of this history. We trust it may soon be given to the public.—Ed.

[3] Col. Potter became a corresponding member of the New-England Historic-Genealogical Society, March 24, 1855.—Ed.

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